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LETTER DATED 14 FEBRUARY 1991 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

On behalf of my Government, I request that you distribute as a document of the Security Council the enclosed texts, which include the statement of 13 February by the White House Press Secretary, on the 12 February bombing of a military command and control centre at Baghdad, as well as excerpts of remarks concerning the same subject by other officials of the United States, including Secretary of Defense Richard Cheney, Lt. General Thomas Kelly, Assistant Secretary of State Margaret Tutwiler and Brigadier General Richard Neal.

(Signed) Thomas R. PICKERING

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Annex I

Statement by the White House Press Secretary on 13 February 1991

Mr. Fitzwater: Last night, coalition forces bombed a military command and control centre at Baghdad that, according to press reports, resulted in a number of civilian casualties.

The loss of civilian lives in time of war is a truly tragic consequence. It saddens everyone to know that innocent people may have died in the course of military conflict. America treats human life as our most precious value. That is why even during this military conflict in which the lives of our servicemen and women are at risk, we will not target civilian facilities. We will continue to hit only military targets. The bunker that was attacked last night was a military target, a command and control centre that fed instructions directly to the Iraqi war machine, painted and camouflaged to avoid detection, and well-documented as a military target. We have been systematically attacking these targets since the war began.

We don't know why civilians were at this location, but we do know that Saddam Hussein does not share our value in the sanctity of life. Indeed, he, time and again, has shown a willingness to sacrifice civilian lives and property that further his war aims.

Civilian hostages were moved in November and December to military sites for use as human shields. Prisoners of war reportedly have been placed at military sites. Roving bands of execution squads search out deserters among his own ranks of servicemen. Command and control centres in Iraq have been placed on top of schools and public buildings. Tanks and other artillery have been placed beside private homes and small villages. And only this morning we have documentation that two MiG 21s have been parked near the front door of a treasured archeologic site which dates back to the twenty-seventh century B.C.

His environmental terrorism spreads throughout the Persian Gulf, killing wildlife and threatening human water supplies. And, finally, Saddam Hussein aims his Scud missiles at innocent civilians in Israel and Saudi Arabia. He kills civilians intentionally and with purpose.

Saddam Hussein created this war. He created the military bunkers. And he can bring the war to an end. We urge him once again to save his people and to comply with the United Nations resolutions.

Annex II

Excerpts from speech by the Secretary of Defense, Richard Cheney, in the United States Chamber of Commerce, 13 February 1991

We've gone back and checked very carefully on the facility that was struck yesterday. It was indeed a military facility, a hardened bunker, camouflage painted on top, plugged into his military communications system. There is no question in my mind or in the minds of key people that we hit a military target.

Some have suggested this morning that Saddam might now be resorting to a practice of deliberately putting civilians in harm's way, deliberately putting civilians on what he knows are military targets.

I have no way of knowing whether or not that was the case in this instance, but we do know that he had previously placed hundreds of foreign civilians held hostage all last fall at strategic sites throughout Iraq. We do know that he's threatened to place prisoners of war at strategic targets throughout Iraq. We do know that he is placing military equipment in civilian areas, especially in Kuwait, but also in Iraq.

And just this morning we received a new piece of intelligence that's interesting because of what it reveals about his practice with respect to his effort to try to blur the lines between military capabilities and civilian areas. There is, in Iraq, a city called Ur. Ur contains ruins that span history. Of particular interest are the remains of the famed Saqqara pyramid. Recent satellite imagery obtained just this morning indicates that there are now two MiG 21s, combat aircraft to the Iraqi air force, parked right next to the pyramid, obviously an effort to use the archeologically significant facility to protect his military capabilities. Clearly he's demonstrated repeatedly a willingness to use his population and cultural artifacts in an effort to shield and protect his military equipment.

Annex III

Excerpts from a briefing by Lieutenant General Thomas Kelly and Captain David Herrington, the Pentagon, 13 February 1991

At the very beginning of the campaign we announced, since the first day, that we were targeting strategic command and control positions. Those targets in downtown Baghdad struck over a period of time were part of that targeting package. The net effect of that targeting was to force the Iraqi military away from these centralized command and control facilities to alternate command and control facilities. What you are seeing on television today is one of the alternate command and control facilities that we knew was active.

Why do we know this was a command and control facility? We know a great deal about this facility. For example we know that it was constructed in the early 1980s during the Iran/Iraq war and it was converted to a military command and control facility in the late 1980s. As a part of that conversion it was taken over by the military. The command and control equipment already there was hardened for protection from a conventional bombing attack, and with electromagnetic pulse protection to allow for continued communication despite a possible nuclear explosion in the area.

The building was not for free access. It had a camouflage roof and a security fence with barbed wire around it. Finally, there apparently was no air raid siren. You would not expect civilians to be fleeing into this facility.

Annex IV

Excerpts from a briefing by Assistant Secretary Margaret Tutwiler, United States Department of State, 13 February 1991

It is not the policy of the United States Government intentionally to target civilians. It is the policy of Saddam Hussein. For our part, we have gone to extreme length, often at the risk to our own pilots, not to target civilians or areas where they live. Indeed, any civilian casualties are a result of a war that Saddam Hussein imposed. Had he complied with the will of the international community, ended his aggression and withdrawn from Kuwait there would be no war. Unfortunately and tragically, the Iraqi people are paying the price for his aggression. The United States did not invade, annex or destroy Kuwait; Saddam Hussein did. It is Saddam, not the allied coalition, who continues to put his narrow ambitions above the well-being of his people and the welfare of his country. It is Saddam Hussein, not the allied coalition, who continues purposely to attack civilian targets in Israel and Saudi Arabia. It is Saddam Hussein, not the allied coalition, who abuses prisoners of war and destroys the ecology of the Gulf. It is Saddam Hussein, not the allied coalition, who continues to defy the will of the entire international community. And it is Saddam Hussein who has the ability to stop the violence by immediately withdrawing from Kuwait. But once again, his personal, ruthless ambitions makes him indifferent to the cost to his own people.

Annex V

Excerpts from a briefing by Brigadier General Richard Neal, United States Central Command, 13 February 1991

I am here to tell you that it was a military bunker. It was a command and control facility. It is one of many that have been used by the Iraqi Government throughout this operation. We have been systematically attacking these bunkers since the beginning of the campaign.

Within the last two weeks, this particular bunker became even more active as a command and control facility. It is a hardened shelter. The roof was just recently painted with a camouflage patina to keep it out of aviation vision.